

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 05182 031939Z

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS ABLD GE

SUBJECT: PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR THE AMBASSADOR

FOR EUR/CE, EUR/EX, FBO

1. CAREFUL ATTENTION OVER MANY MONTHS HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT, AND NOW THIS EMBASSY, TO THE LOCATION OF A SUITABLE PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN BERLIN. FROM MANY POINTS OF VIEW THE NORDENDSTRASSE PROPERTY HAS APPEARED TO BE NOT ONLY AN ADEQUATE BUT INDEED AN EXCELLENT ANSWER TO THIS NEED. HOWEVER, MY EXPERIENCE SINCE ARRIVING HERE, AND A REVIEW OF ALL THE FACTORS BEARING UPON THE RENOVATION OF THIS PROPERTY, LEAD ME TO CONCLUDE THAT IT IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE USG TO PROCEED FURTHER WITH THE ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION OF THIS RESIDENCE.
2. THE MAIN REASONS ARE THE FOLLOWING:

A) THE COST OF RENOVATION WILL, IT APPEARS, BE WELL OVER 1/2 MILLION DOLLARS, AND WHILE THIS WOULD NOT BE BORNE AS A DIRECT COST BY THE USG, THIS COST WOULD BE REFLECTED IN EXTREMELY HIGH RENTAL CHARGES OVER MANY YEARS;

B) A RESIDENCE OF THIS SIZE WOULD REQUIRE A MINIMUM OF SIX PERMANENT SERVANTS, AND THE EXPERIENCE OF DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL HAS BEEN THAT COMPETENT HOUSEHOLD

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 BERLIN 05182 031939Z

STAFF IS ALL BUT IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN LOCALLY; AND

C) THE PROPERTY ITSELF IS SOMEWHAT GRANDIOSE IN TERMS OF THE U.S. PRESENCE AND PURPOSE IN BERLIN FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS AT LEAST.

3. MRS. COOPER AND I, MOREOVER, FIND OUR PRESENT RESIDENCE AT STAUNGERSTRASSE 18 SUFFICIENT IN SIZE AND REPRESENTATIONAL CHARACTER TO MEET NOT ONLY OUR NEED, BUT -- WE WOULD JUDGE -- THE NEEDS OF OUR SUCCESSORS OVER A PERIOD OF MANY YEARS TO COME. IT CAN COMFORTABLY ACCOMMODATE A FAMILY WITH FOUR OR FIVE CHILDREN. I AM GRATEFUL TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE FUNDS PROVIDED TO MAKE CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS RESIDENCE, PARTICULARLY IN THE KITCHEN AREAS. NOT MUCH MORE MONEY WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE THE HOUSE FULLY SUITABLE AS AN AMBASSADORIAL RESIDENCE, PARTICULARLY WHEN LANDSCAPING HAS BEEN COMPLETED. IN TIMES OF TIGHT BUDGETS AND A NEED FOR THE MOST SERIOUS KIND OF RESTRAINT IN EXPENDITURES, IT IS IN THE USG INTEREST TO SETTLE ON WHAT IS NOW THE TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN THE STAWANGERSTRASSE AS THE PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR THE U.S. AMBASSADOR IN BERLIN.

4. ACCORDINGLY, I REQUEST THAT STEPS BE TAKEN TO DISCONTINUE ALL EFFORTS LEADING TOWARD THE ACQUISITION AND RENOVATION OF THE NORDENSTRASSE PROPERTY. INSTEAD, PRIORITY ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THOSE MATTERS REMAINING TO BE ACCOMPLISHED AT THE STAWANGERSTRASSE RESIDENCE. I REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO INFORM THE OFFICE OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICES (DLA) THAT THE USG HAS NO FURTHER INTEREST IN THE NORDENSTRASSE PROPERTY. COOPER

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